

UNCLASSIFIED

AD NUMBER

AD877984

LIMITATION CHANGES

TO:

Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

FROM:

Distribution authorized to U.S. Gov't. agencies and their contractors;
Administrative/Operational Use; 13 AUG 1966.
Other requests shall be referred to Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations, Washington, DC 20310.

AUTHORITY

AGO ltr 29 Apr 1980

THIS PAGE IS UNCLASSIFIED

80-5-1
INDEXED

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 41ST SIGNAL BATTALION (COMBAT AREA)
APO 96238

SCCVNG-CA

13 August 1966

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1966,
Reports Control Symbol CSFor-65

THRU: Commanding Officer
21st Signal Group
APO 96238

THRU: Commanding General
1st Signal Brigade (USAS "RATCOM")
APO 96307

THRU: Commanding General
United States Army, Vietnam
ATTN: AVC
APO 96307

TO: Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations
Department of the Army
Washington D.C., 20310

References: a. AR 525, dated 29 October 1959, Subject: Combat
Operation Command Report.

b. USARV Circular 870-1, dated 11 November 1965, with change 1,
dated 1 April 1966, Subject: The Quarterly Command Report.

c. USARV Circular 870-2, dated 19 July 1966, Subject: Opera-
tional Report of Lessons Learned, Reports Control Symbol CSFor-65.

SECTION I

SIGNIFICANT ORGANIZATION OR UNIT ACTIVITIES

1. General: The period 1 May to 31 July 1966 was marked by a change of area responsibilities, new command lines and the activation of several communications systems. The basic battalion was modified by USARPAC General Order Number 258, dated 16 August 1965, and was further tailored less Company D by 1st Signal Brigade General Order Number 4 and 21st Group General Order Number 11. The result was the attachment of various numbered signal companies and detachments to the battalion and placing the battalion under the operational control of 21st Signal Group.

FOR OTUT
660219

UNCLASSIFIED REPORT
DISTRIBUTION NO FOREIGN WITHOUT APPROVAL OF
ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF FOR FORCE DEVELOPMENT
(ARMY) ATTN: FOR OT UT, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

This document is subject to special export controls and each transmission of this document to foreign governments or foreign nationals may be made only with prior approval of

SCCVNG-CA

13 August 1966

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1966,
Reports Control Symbol CSFor-65

2. Attachments: Under the re-distribution of area responsibilities, the 362d Signal Company (Tropo) was attached to the battalion for all purposes (2d Signal Group General Order 15, dated 15 April 1966). The company had previously been attached for administration to the 39th Signal Group with the mission of supporting all the tropospheric sites in the Republic of Vietnam. On 1 May, the southern and coastal sites were placed under the operational control of the 518th Signal Company (Microwave). The 362d Signal Company retained the maintenance responsibility and facility located at Nha Trang. This arrangement has been satisfactory and more systems are being installed without any variation in mission. The addition of the 362d increased the authorized strength of the battalion to one hundred (100) officer, twenty-six (26) warrant officers, and two thousand fifty-six (2,056) enlisted men.

3. Personnel and Administration: a. Personnel shortages had been negligible during the first part of the period covered by this report but have increased in significance toward the latter part. An increased operational mission without increased manning coupled with the annual rotation "hump" in July contributed to this situation. Throughout the entire period certain military occupational specialties (MOS's) have continued to be critical. Specifically those MOS's and their present status are as follows:

<u>MOS</u>	<u>Authorized</u>	<u>Actual</u>
31L (Field Radio Equip Repairman)	74	0
31M (Radio/Relay Carrier Attendant)	277	199
63B (Wheel Vehicle Mechanic)	66	0
71B (Clerk-Typist)	20	7
71H (Personnel Specialist)	20	14
76K (General Supply)	20	10
94B (Cook)	66	44

b. The personnel gains and losses chart does not reflect an actual shortage or even a critical situation. Rather, it shows what was authorized on USARPAC General Order 258. The operational mission has so increased and changed since the General Order that many areas may be critical yet are indicated as overstrength. Changes to the Table of Organization and Equipment (TOE) were submitted 20 June 1966 to correct the situation.

c. Personnel gains and losses 1 May to 31 July 1966:

SCCVNG-CA

13 August 1966

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1966,
Reports Control Symbol CSFor-65

<u>Strength Figures</u>	<u>Officer</u>	<u>Warrant</u>	<u>Enlisted</u>
Authorized 1 May 66	100	26	2056
Actual 1 May 66	104	28	2113
Authority 31 Jul 66	100	26	2056
Actual 31 Jul 66	90	23	2085
Losses	52	13	507
Gains	38	10	479

4. Intelligence: a. A program was initiated to conduct a physical inspection of battalion facilities located in thirty-six (36) separate areas throughout I and II Corps Tactical Zones. At about the same time similar programs were also introduced by Field Forces Vietnam I and 1st Signal Brigade (USASTRATCOM). Inspections of these areas had previously been conducted by 2d Signal Group and later by 21st Signal Group. Site commanders were confronted with four separate physical inspections annually. The situation was remedied by an agreement among the headquarters to conduct simultaneous inspections.

b. Authority was given the battalion to grant access to cryptomaterial up to and including Secret. The majority of personnel who require Secret clearances also require the same degree of crypto access. A delay of 10-14 days was experienced in processing a crypto access through higher headquarters. Previously authority had been given only to validate Secret clearances.

5. Operations: a. Attachments and detachments, mission changes, and the implementation of doctrinal concepts have occurred during the last quarter. These undertakings have been successful but created multiple changes in procedures. As an illustration, the attachment of the 362d Light Trope Company on 1 May 1966 obligated the operations personnel of the battalion to think "Big"--big in site selection, in distance, in power requirements, in quantity of operators, and in required support. The operating personnel were normally combat area oriented and a transition had to be made to efficiently employ the equipment.

b. With the assistance of higher headquarters and the experience in the Trope Company, new systems were activated between Pr'Line and Saigon and ninety channels of microwave installed from Pr'Line to Hill 182 in Cam Ranh Bay. Although the communications strides were notable, they were severely hampered by the low engineer construction priority. Most of the work was done through self-help except heavy construction and road building.

SCCVNG-CA

13 August

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1966,
Reports Control Symbol CSFor-65

c. Re-assignment of the battalion from 2d Signal Group to 21st Signal Group had two bonus effects. One, 21st Signal Group is in a better geographical position to control and direct communications in this area; and two, personnel and equipment resources in 21st Signal Group need not be divided among other battalion size units. Although assigned to 21st Signal Group, 2d Signal Group Letters of Instruction (LOI) to the battalion are still in effect. Some have been incorporated into the battalion SOP; others are either awaiting action of other battalions or services or awaiting the arrival of equipment to complete the project. The interface of the two Groups is complete and all future requirements will be generated by the 21st Signal Group.

d. Employment of the Area Communications Commander concept was initiated by the 1st Signal Brigade (USASTRATCOM) in order to facilitate coordination between elements of the Signal Brigade and other US Army, Vietnam, elements. When implemented on 1 June 1966, there was skepticism and confusion concerning the transfer of personnel and equipment. However, within thirty days most of the problems had been resolved and the Area Communications Commander concept is proving to be well worth while.

e. Cable construction decreased in comparison with the previous quarter. This decrease was not caused by the lack of requirements, but was brought about by the shortage of materials and qualified cable splicers. Cam Ranh Bay, An Khe, and Phu Thanh Valley were the areas of greatest activity. A recap is indicated below showing the areas, type and amount of cable installed.

<u>Cam Ranh Bay</u>		<u>An Khe</u>		<u>Phu Thanh Valley</u>	
200-pair	4,950 ft	50-pair	6,000 ft	26-pair	10,000 ft
100-pair	11,250 ft	26-pair	21,000 ft	5-pair	3,000 ft
50-pair	4,000 ft			SP-4	8,780 ft
26-pair	10,000 ft			WD-1	33 mi

f. VHF systems with carrier back-up were used extensively in battalion supported operations. Transportability, reliability, and low power requirements are the major reasons for its use. Fifty-six (56) systems at thirty-six (36) sites are battalion controlled and instructions for more installations have already been received. These installations are contingent upon availability of equipment and personnel from outside resources as the battalion is fully committed.

6. Training: a. Each man received 28.8 hours of formalized training in mandatory subjects. Included as a part of formalized

SCCVNG-CA

13 August 1966

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1966,
Reports Control Symbol CSFor-65

training was familiarization firing for all arrivals in-country for the past three months.

b. Cross-training has received command interest because of the large turn-over of personnel in critical MOS's. A total of one hundred fifty (150) enlisted men received 17,844 hours of cross-training in the critical specialties.

7. Logistics: a. Normal repair parts resupply, for electronic equipment has improved. Maintenance float items for electronic equipment are being supplied slowly through normal supply channels. Maintenance float levels have not been achieved because of the slow resupply and the necessity to commit maintenance float items to operational commitments.

b. Repair parts resupply for power generating equipment continues to remain critical. The situation is further aggravated by the variety of models and types of generators on hand. A program has been initiated to standardize and replace these generators, but the low priority of this unit indicates no immediate improvement. The rate of dead-line generators and generators salvaged has increased because of the above facts.

c. Site communications requirements dictate larger generators to be authorized. The logistical problems involved in maintaining a large quantity of small generators is taxing the maintenance capability of the units. A faster method of approval and procurement of larger generating equipment is necessary to provide adequate power for communications facilities. Adequate back-up support in generators and repair parts and power distribution materials must be included in this program.

d. Cannibalization procedures by Ordnance support organizations have improved the supply of repair parts and readiness postures of the units.

8. Aviation: a. Turn-over of aviation officer personnel (75% during the quarter) handicapped aviation operations. Prior to flying a mission, newly assigned aviators must be in-country and area-qualified in battalion assigned aircraft. This created a problem in itself as there are no instructor pilots in the battalion. Personnel were sent to the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) and other places until the check rides were completed. This problem still exists.

b. The low priority which is assigned the battalion by support maintenance results in aircraft being down for extended periods. Requisitioning of parts and repair of aircraft are also affected. This problem has been lessened somewhat by the Group Aviation Officer.

SCCVNG-CA

13 August 1966

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1966
Reports Control Symbol CSFor-65

c. Despite the low availability of aircraft during the quarter, a majority of missions were completed. The total cargo and passengers carried compares generally with the previous quarter. A summary of operations for May, June, and July is listed below:

	<u>MAY</u>	<u>JUNE</u>	<u>JULY</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Total Hours Flown	146:10	153:20	143:00	442:30
Number of Sorties Flown	189	245	128	562
Number of Passengers Transported	221	213	119	553
Pounds of Cargo Delivered	11,975	22,155	23,665	57,795

SECTION II

COMMANDERS OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Part 1, Observations (Lessons Learned)

1. ITEM: Unit Tables of Organization and Equipment (Personnel)

a. DISCUSSION: USARPAC General Order Number 258 caused the tailoring of almost every company. Units who were authorized personnel in excess of their TOE in a particular MOS were tasked with attaching or transferring these personnel to another unit. These units required these personnel but were not authorized them. Others find that personnel in a proper specialty are inadequately authorized in numbers and by grade for the mission. Numerous attachments of personnel provides flexibility and responsiveness but results in endless personnel problems.

b. OBSERVATION: Three (3) to nine (9) months elapse from the time of submission to the time of approval of a MTOE. The time required and the inflexibility of the modified TO&E approval system is unrealistic in this situation. A realistic approach would be the table of distribution (TD) concept with a thirty day approval time after requested changes are submitted. This would add flexibility and enable accurate and meaningful evaluation.

2. ITEM: Personnel Management Actions (Personnel)

a. DISCUSSION: Personnel management and actions in a battalion of this magnitude is a tremendous task. The present organizational structure both in quantity and grade structure does not lend itself towards accurate records and prompt personnel actions. Required reports and feed back data are all done manually. Again the attaching and

SCCVNG-CA

13 August 1966

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1966,
Reports Control Symbol CSFor-65

detaching of company size units does not help the situation.

b. OBSERVATION: A battalion personnel section can process efficiently only a given number of personnel. There are times in which accurate and timely feedback is required by the higher headquarters and ineffective data could deter the battalion mission. Realistic prior planning and timely decisions can help the overall personnel management program.

3. ITEM: Cable Splicers. (Operations)

a. DISCUSSION: TO & E 11-470 cable construction companies have as their primary mission the installation of WD-1, and spiral four cable and are not authorized cable splicers. A large percentage of cable construction throughout the country is now multi-pair cable ranging from fifty (50) to four-hundred (400) pair cables. Lack of qualified splicers has delayed installation and hindered the improvement of systems. As an interim solution, personnel surveys have been made to ascertain those individuals having any experience in multi-pair cable splicing. These individuals are utilized wherever splicing is required.

b. OBSERVATION: Determined efforts should be made to secure the swift approval of the MTOE. Those units who have assumed a Base Camp support mission should have multi-pair cable splicers assigned. Further, in-country programs are needed to train additional personnel.

4. ITEM: Availability of Materials. (Operations)

a. DISCUSSION: Availability of materials and equipment to properly complete particular cable projects have been in short supply. This has hampered expeditions project completions and caused unnecessary delay in service to subscribers. Terminal cans for outdoor installation, cable clamps, line trucks and pole trailers have been in particular short supply.

b. OBSERVATION: Solutions to the immediate problems have been to borrow equipment and material from another unit/area and transport them to the construction site. Approval of MTOE's submitted would make available those equipments presently in short supply. It would also enable them to be positioned in an area of projected utilization. The preparation of complete Bills of Materials (BOM) and receipt prior to initiation of cable projects would ensure timely and professional work.

5. ITEM: Sandbagging Vanized Signal Equipment. (Operations)

a. DISCUSSION: Shelterized equipment located at signal sites must be sandbagged for protection against small arms fire or small caliber

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1966,
Reports Control Symbol CSFor-65

indirect fire. The sandbagging, however creates a tremendous heat problem unless a 12" or greater air space is left between the top of the shelter and the overhead layer of sandbags.

b. OBSERVATION: All operators and site commanders must be aware of this situation and prepare their sandbagging to allow heat dissipation.

6. ITEM: VHF System Outages (Operations)

a. DISCUSSION: Many VHF system outages result from faulty antennas or coaxial cable connections. This is particularly true of the coastal sites whose antennas and coaxial connectors are directly exposed to the corrosive effects of salt water. Extended outages and poor quality systems result when the operator is not aware of these possibilities.

b. OBSERVATIONS: Operators and site commanders must be aware of this problem and schedule timely inspections to combat it.

7. ITEM: Engineer Support (Operations)

a. DISCUSSION: Several projects have not been completed because of engineer support. Lang Bian Mountain, Pr'Line, Hill 180, and Hill 184 projects could have met completion dates if engineer support was available. Priorities assigned are too low to warrant faster action.

b. OBSERVATION: During the planning phase, a priority should be assigned compatible with the completion dates.

8. ITEM: Physical Security Inspections (Intelligence)

a. DISCUSSION: Considerable difficulty is created for site commanders in having to prepare for four separate security inspections. Besides the administrative problems created by the inspecting party, the commander may receive four divergent estimations of his site security. A consolidation of inspections by the several headquarters not only eliminate these difficulties but effectively provides a common set of criteria to evaluate the physical security posture of a signal site.

b. OBSERVATION: Consolidation of physical security inspections should be furthered whenever possible.

9. ITEM: Authority to Grant Access to Secret/Crypto Material
(Intelligence)

a. DISCUSSION: It seems little purpose to rest the authority to grant access to Secret/Crypto material at group level. If a headquarters is

SOCVNG-CA

13 August 1966

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1966,
Reports Control Symbol CSFor-65

granted authority to validate a certain degree of security clearance, then it should also be granted authority to grant the commensurate degree of CRYPTO access. Any other arrangement creates a delay in processing. Such delays are unacceptable in a command where tours are of one year and manpower is limited.

b. OBSERVATION: Administrative delay in processing requests for Secret/Crypto access has been appreciably reduced since the authority to grant such access was delegated to this headquarters.

10. ITEM: Non-Availability of Large Generators (Logistics)

a. DISCUSSION: Communications complexes originally constructed by combat area support units have grown into large fixed-station complexes. These complexes require large quantities of power to operate efficiently for sustained periods. In many cases base development power programs are lagging behind communications requirements. This necessitates use of many small generators causing an increase in personnel and maintenance problems.

b. OBSERVATION: During the site planning phase, power should be considered and future requirements projected.

11. ITEM: Non-TOE-Type Generators Issued Minus PLL (Logistics)

a. DISCUSSION: Non-TOE-type generators are issued to units without the capability to repair them. Several months are required to establish a PLL. In the interim there is little or no capability of performing any maintenance other than the normal PM. In addition, repair parts for Japanese procured generators are very difficult to obtain because of lack of manuals and Federal stock numbers.

b. OBSERVATION: Generators should be procured with a supply of repair parts for a period of 90 days. Units should be authorized to use the Red Ball Express to obtain parts for a modified PLL to carry them through this period. Normal Red Ball after a generator is dead-lined often takes several weeks, especially at distant sites.

12. ITEM: Low Repair and Maintenance Priority for Battalion Aircraft (Aviation)

a. DISCUSSION: The battalion was directed to trade two UH-1D helicopters for two UH-1B models during the month of May. The two replacement helicopters were in very poor condition and required considerable time and maintenance before they could be used for missions in support of the battalion. One helicopter was traded in mid-June for another UH-1B which was in somewhat better condition. The replacement aircraft

SCCVNG-CA

13 August 1966

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1966,
Reports Control Symbol (CSFor-65)

has given fair service but is the same year model as the previous aircraft and is subject to the same maintenance requirements due to age.

b. OBSERVATION: The priority assigned the battalion by the support maintenance and supply facility is not compatible with the battalion mission. Aircraft is the only means of travel to some of the thirty-six sites scattered over the I and II Corps area. When they are not available because of maintenance or supply support, the battalion mission is greatly deterrdd.

Part 2, Recommendations (Lessons Learned)

1. With the continuing growth and expansion of communications in the 41st Signal Battalion's area of responsibility, several problem areas have developed, or have become more acute than in the past. One of the most perplexing problems is the inability to exchange a grouping of small power units located at a single signal site for one or two large power sources. A continuing requirement exists for a power supply exchange point that would enable units to exchange a grouping of small power units for large KW units up to and including 150 KW.

2. Another recommendation is to add light and medium mortars to the TOE of this battalion. The isolated signal sites are responsible for their own defense, yet do not have this inherent capability for defense. Several mortars have been obtained and crews trained in-country. It is further recommended that signal units deployed to an operations area such as this, be trained to employ and effectively use the 60 and 81 MM mortars.

3. A definite need exists for a battalion HF Control Net. This battalion currently operates in a 45,000 square mile area utilizing normal telephone and teletype service for command and control. In many instances this "normal" service does not satisfy the requirement for immediate response to restore circuits and systems. SSB radios could readily be employed at all sites to provide command control as well as a channel for operational/technical control.

WILLIAM F. McCORMICK JR
DTC, SigC
Commanding

UNCLASSIFIED

Security Classification

DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D

(Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overall report is classified)

1. ORIGINATING ACTIVITY (Corporate author)

HQ DA, OACSFOR, Washington, D.C. 20310

2a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

UNCLASSIFIED

2b. GROUP

3. REPORT TITLE

Operational Report - Lessons Learned, HQ, 41st Signal Battalion

4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates)

Experiences of unit engaged in counterinsurgency operations 1 May to 31 July 1966.

5. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name)

CO, 41st Signal Battalion

6. REPORT DATE

13 August 1966

7a. TOTAL NO. OF PAGES

11

7b. NO. OF REFS

8a. CONTRACT OR GRANT NO.

a. PROJECT NO.

N/A

c.

d.

9a. ORIGINATOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)

660219

9b. OTHER REPORT NO(S) (Any other numbers that may be assigned this report)

10. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT

11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

N/A

12. SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY

DA, OACSFOR, Washington, D.C. 20310

13. ABSTRACT